Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1-17. (Canceled)

18. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 21, wherein said performing is implemented by a speech recognition processor.

19. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 21, wherein said performing is further based on a second set of acoustical models that has been defined for other words in the vocabulary.

20. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 19, wherein said second set of acoustical models is defined at a quality level different than the set of acoustical models for the numeric language.

21. (Previously Presented) A speech recognition method, comprising:

receiving a speech signal;

performing a speech recognition process on the received speech signal to produce speech recognition results, the speech recognition process being based on a set of acoustical models that has been defined for a numeric language, wherein the numeric language includes a subset of a vocabulary, the subset of the vocabulary including words that identify digits in number strings and words that enable the interpretation and understanding of number strings; and

generating a sequence of digits using said speech recognition results, said generating being based on a set of rules, wherein

the numeric language includes digits, natural numbers, alphabets, re-starts, and city/country name classes.

22. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 21, wherein the acoustical models are hidden Markov models.

23. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 21, wherein said generating is implemented by a numeric understanding processor.

24. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 21, wherein the set of rules includes one of a naturals rule and alphabets rule.

25. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 21, wherein the set of rules includes a restarts rule.

26. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 21, wherein the set of rules includes a city/country rule.

27. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 21, wherein the set of rules includes a numeric phrases rule that realigns digits.

28-35. (Canceled)

36. (Previously Presented) A system comprising:

a speech recognition processor that receives unconstrained input speech and outputs a string of words, the speech recognition processor being based on a numeric language that represents a subset of a vocabulary, the subset including a set of words identified as being relevant for interpreting and understanding number strings;

a numeric understanding processor containing classes of rules for converting the string of words into a sequence of digits;

an acoustic model database utilized by the speech recognition processor;

a validation database that stores a set of valid numbers; and

a string validation processor that outputs validity information based on a comparison of a sequence of digits output by the numeric understanding processor with valid numbers in the validation database, wherein

said numeric language includes digits, natural numbers, alphabets, re-starts, and city/country name phrase classes.

37. (Canceled)